

6th Asia Smart City Conference “Yokohama Declaration”

For the past six years, we have held the “Asia Smart City Conference” with an aim to enhance city-to-city collaboration and partnership among cities and related international institutions to achieve smart and sustainable urban growth in Asia.

“Building a Market Place for smart and sustainable urban growth” was the main theme for this sixth Conference, and discussions were held to co-create smart urban solutions for Asia and Asia Pacific. Over 20 cities, international institutions, specialized institutions, and private sector representatives came together, bringing various issues and expertise to the table, and held practical discussions aimed at realizing livable, inclusive, sustainable, and resilient cities and communities. Specifically, opinions from various specialized and technical resource persons were exchanged on the following four themes in the separate Thematic Meetings:

- 1) Smart ways of handling solid waste and waste water, including sludge treatment;
- 2) Approaches towards achieving energy saving for low carbon urban development and bringing smart mobility to communities;
- 3) Further utilization of advanced information and communication technologies (ICT) and big data for smart urban management; and
- 4) Effective modalities to bring out Japanese experiences towards smart urban development in Asia.

The plenary session of the conference integrated the results of the Thematic Meetings and the outcomes of the Smart Urban Development Conference, held jointly by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. Discussions on what information should be exchanged and what roles cities, organizations, and private firms should take to find concrete solutions to urban issues lead participants to the following ideas:

1. To cope with complex as well as multi-dimensional emerging urban issues, city leaders must consult with civil society, academe and businesses entities effectively while exhibiting strong leadership. Learning and co-creating best available solutions with international communities proves essential, and current digital media and networking capability facilitate city leaders' achievement of these goals.

2. In order to incorporate the best practices of successful urban solutions in various regions of the world, it is necessary to generate social innovation while creating positive awareness among citizens, governments, and business entities, and adopt new modalities of urban management.
3. Multilateral discussions by diverse participants are the source for the co-creation of effective and innovative solutions. Platforms such as the “Asia Smart City Alliance” should function as an ideal venue to exchange ideas, experiences, and innovations.
4. The 21st century is the “century of cities,” and cities can provide area-based solutions effectively. Each city has a crucial responsibility to adopt the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), New Urban Agenda under HABITAT III, the Paris Agreement under Conference of the Parties (COP21), and other frameworks to achieve the goals of the international community.
5. It is important for cities to continually share their accomplishments in smart urban development with the international community.

We will report the content of this Yokohama Declaration to the Conference of the Parties 23 (COP23), to be held in Bonn, Germany in November this year, and to other relevant international conferences.